

His Suburban Women

-Miriam was chaos. An artist. She ripped up all my shirts and presented them to me as a collage: *Ends*, she called it. The divorce was chaos too, but we both tried.

Anyway, Lucille's an accountant. No surprises. I do. I mean I send her flowers and the like. The court-forced counseling with Miriam showed me husbands' neglect etc. So I've become one of pure gold. And I try to stay upbeat even though work's turning to shit lately.

-Do they still light candles in Catholic churches? Little irrational insurance to go along with your rational conduct?

-Nah! For the first time in my life I'm on top of things.

-She ran away! Church doing *Rose Marie* and she took off with a Mountie after dress rehearsal.

-I heard. Is he really tall?

-Yeah. Through the sunroof of her Mazda, cast members say. Oh God! What...?

-You're a short, dull guy. We know that. She has a dull job. Then strides in six-eight Redcock of the Mounties and...

-Oh God I wish you wouldn't say sex things!

-Hurts. Of course. Sorry. What do you think you want?

-Help me find them!

-No way! She'll come back. I know him. He sings in all the church things and his brain is in inverse proportion to his prick. Just no there there, so she'll get sick of talking back to the TV. Besides his wife'd take him for everything. He inherited scads! Comes from clever people, believe it or not. Chances are he's home by now begging for forgiveness. Maybe in rugged song.

-What'll I do?

- No one can answer that question, least of all you. Just another mini tragedy in the bare-ass borough next to the naked city.
- Does humiliation have to come along with everything? Probably laughing all over town!
- Hey! Half the world laughs at the other half. What's the killer is the Mountie image. That'll stick for years.
- I'll kill myself!
- Don't bother. That halfwit's Mountie's hat sticking up from that little Mazda as they putt-putted to perdition through High Street traffic will be undying folklore. Better the question Can this marriage be saved?
- Can it?
- Worse things have happened. Look around you: now-cosy mates who once screwed much that moved.
- What a clusterfuck!
- (sings) *When I'm calling you, whoo whoo whoo, whoo whoo whoo.*
- What the hell is that?
- Indian Love Call.* They sang it down High Street. Her tremulo-soprano to his vacanto-basso. Guys in pool hall dropped their cues in all the beauty.
- You and your language! Are you invulnerable? Is that it?
- Protects me as well as anything can.